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AND  
ANNALS OF EDUCATION.

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W. L. MARSH, Editor of this Number.

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OPPOSING THEORIES.

It is a source of surprise and amusement to notice the contradictory and oftentimes absurd theories advanced by some of our eminent educators in regard to the best methods of teaching the rudimentary branches of an English education.

So contradictory are the statements, and so bold the assertions of each, that his particular theory is the *best*—in fact the *only true one*—that the young teacher, who has been accustomed to refer to the pages of his educational journal for the views of teachers ripe in experience, and hence qualified to instruct, is disappointed to find only the diverse theories and speculations of men, who, not unfrequently, have had little or no experience in the department concerning which they write so freely. Their views are *impracticable*—sometimes *absurd*. The authors do not reduce them to practice in their *own* teaching, nor would they have us practice upon them.

Appended to their essays should appear the direction,

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which frequently accompanies the prescription of the apothecary, "Before taken, to be well shaken."

There are two classes of these writers, who may be termed the *old* and *new School theorists*.

They agree with each other in regard to teaching no branch, however elementary it may be in principle.

The former holds that learning the alphabet is a "mere act of memory," that the "old repetition method" is the correct one, and practicing upon it he succeeds in teaching the pupil to "*say his letters*" before he has *learned even one*.

The latter dissents entirely from what he terms the "old-fogyism" of the former, and asserts with more vehemence than modesty, and with a boldness unwarranted by actual experience, that the *true theory* implies that the pupil should first learn *words*, then the *power* and *sound* of each *letter*, and *lastly* the letters themselves.

He forgets that if he were to enter upon the study of a foreign language to-morrow, he would commence with the "old foggyish" principle which he to-day denounces, and *first* learn the *letters*, feeling that there would be ample time in the future to learn their sounds and powers.

But the arguments with which they would persuade us to abandon one theory for another are as absurd as the theories promulgated. Here is one copied from a late number of the "Massachusetts Teacher," advanced to prove that the "old repetition method" of teaching the alphabet was a grievous one. The writer says—"You remember the method fellow-teacher, and *we* remember it *too*.

"You remember how the little ones hung their heads when they were called upon to 'come and say their letters;' how some, not to be won by coaxing, had to be dragged out *vi et armis*; how the little things stood with palpitating hearts, hands behind their backs, and their eyes fixed, not upon the book, but upon the mysterious '*pen-knife*,' the pointer, which was to them the object of so much dread, least it might, perchance, come in contact with their 'ears;' how in response to the question—"What's that? there was a pause, and when you in your dignity vociferated, one after another

the names of the letters, then followed the imitation, those never to be forgotten sounds, a-yer, b-yer, c-yer, &c., &c."

Now there is a great amount of nonsense expressed by writers in regard to the "old repetition method" of our early teachers. There always has been, and will be, a large number of sour-tempered, irritable teachers, but, because one had the misfortune in youth to be instructed by such an one, that fact alone affords no excuse for condemning a system of instruction, or a class of teachers, most of whom were kind and patient, and to whom we owe so much. The writer's suggestions in regard to teaching the alphabet to classes, and the use of the blackboard, are *good*, and he avoids the extremes attained by many, but he will agree with me that the "pen knife" can be made an instrument of terror to a *class*, and that an irascible teacher would succeed but poorly although possessed of his valuable hints.

The evil complained of was not so much in the *knife*, or the *system*, as in the *disposition* and *want of tact* in the teacher, and the writer states, in the conclusion of his excellent article, certain traits, which if a teacher possess, will render success certain. Hear him. "The teacher must be *interested*; must talk much; *explain* and *simplify* much, and constantly vary the exercise, so that the children shall feel that they are having a right good time in saying their letters."

"Success will depend very much upon the *ingenuity*, *interest* and *easy familiarity* of the teacher in conducting the exercise."

Here is the true key to success. Not upon *this theory* or *that*, not upon "*penknife*, *rod*, *blackboard*," is success or failure based, but in the "*ingenuity*" of the teacher and the skill manifested in so conducting the exercise that the energies of the pupil shall not flag, nor the mind become wearied by sameness.

Again, in regard to teaching spelling there exists a like "difference of opinion."

As proof of this it is only necessary to turn to the Sep-

tember, November and December Numbers of the Journal for the past year.

The Editor of the September Number asserts that "The complaint of bad spelling in all our schools is almost universal," and asks "Why is it that our fathers and mothers came from these same district schools thoroughly versed in the art of spelling?"

Admitting the complaint to be "almost universal," the answer to the question would still be, that "our fathers and mothers *did not* come from these same district schools '*thoroughly versed*' in the art of spelling." Of this fact their exists abundant proof. It is fair to presume that the "thousands of the fathers and mothers" who "could spell every word within the lids of Webster's Spelling Book, closing up with the abbreviations and marks of punctuation" are the parents of the present generation of pupils, and if the notes and excuses, which find their way to the teacher's table, are to be taken as samples of the "finished scholarship" of their day, I am sure no teacher will care to point to it as a model worthy of imitation.

But let us accept the statement that spelling is not so thoroughly taught now as formerly, for a moment, as true, and seek the "*cause* and remedy." An experienced teacher and an "Acting School Visitor" assure us that the cause is attributable to a great extent to the "Speller and Definer" so common in our schools, and that a *remedy* may be found by discarding the work and returning to the "good old way" of oral spelling.

So much confidence have they in the efficacy of their remedy, that they deem a trial of its merits unnecessary, and assure us that were it in their power "every school-room in the land should be divested of them (the Speller and Definer) in a single day."

Hardly have these articles received the attention of teachers, before the December Number comes to hand, in which "Practical" states that he commenced teaching nearly thirty years ago, and "was not long in discovering, what not only these gentlemen (quoted above) but hundreds of teachers

before and since have discovered, that spelling, as taught in schools, was for some reason of very little practical value, and as hundreds of others had and are still doing, he undertook to find the "cause and remedy." He proceeds as follows,—“Let it be sufficient to state, that after several years of this sort of inquiry, I became convinced that the *Spelling Book* and *oral spelling* were the *real* sources, not only of most of the *bad spelling*, but most of the *stupidity*, the *senseless lip-study*, and the *inveterate* dislike to books, which are so largely entailed upon our children ; and nearly *twenty years* ago I banished them *both* from the *school-room*.”

Let us see where a young teacher, following out the theories furnished above, would find himself.

Our teacher and “An Acting School Visitor” have induced him to discard the Speller and Definer, to abandon the *written system* as too “ceremonial,” and return to the true (?) method of oral spelling from the Spelling Book, when “Practical” steps forward and says this is all wrong—the *Spelling Book* and *oral spelling* are the *cause* and not the *remedy*—and they must be banished from the school if he would attain the desired end. He follows the admonition of his counsellor, and you see his forlorn position. “In the *multitude* of counsellors there is *safety*”—*sometimes*.

Following to their conclusions the extreme views of his counsellors in regard to their teaching any branch, for this “difference of opinion” exists in regard to all, the teacher would soon find himself in a condition similar to that of the man who “went down to Jericho” and was “stripped of his raiment.”

One would “divest” him of his “definer” and “ceremonial” of *writing*, the other would “banish” his “speller” and “oral” powers, and thus both would leave him not only “stripped,” but *dumb*. And as the same “difference of opinion” extends itself to all branches, as could be shown, did the space permit, the teacher will soon learn, if he has not already done so, how little reliance can be placed upon the *theories* of any one, and that his success will mainly depend upon his “*ingenuity*, *interest* and *easy familiarity* in conducting the exercise,” whatever it be.

## ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS, ANNUALLY,

WE are informed by our superintendent of common schools, in his report of 1860, is actually lost by *irregular attendance* of children in our schools. Now, teachers and school visitors of Connecticut, can we be faithful to our trusts, and allow the loss of this vast sum, which will in every generation, at interest, amount to quadruple our boasted school fund?

Can we as citizens, rejoicing in the well established reputation as "the land of steady habits," suffer this lamentable state of affairs to continue, and not put forth greater efforts for its correction?

But, says one, we are fully up to the average of other states in this respect and why need we exert ourselves; can not parents and guardians do as they please about sending their children to school regularly? Admitting the fact that we are on an average with other states, and that parents can do as they please; it does not remedy the evil nor lessen the amount lost to their children.

Thus we might reason in regard to the christianization of the world; and say if the world is to be evangelized, so let it be.

We do not propose to enter into any argument, to prove the evils of irregular attendance, and those growing out of it, for they are universally admitted by all educators. Neither do we deem it advisable to present at this time, if it were practicable, a memorial to the law givers of our state. But we would make an appeal to the parents and guardians, through teachers and school visitors, into whose hands the Journal may fall.

We know parents and guardians are more censurable than others; and we know equally as well, that they do *not* realize *all* the evils resulting from this bad practice. Then let every teacher, and those whose especial duty it is to look after our schools, do what they can to diffuse through their several localities, a healthful influence on this subject. Let every one do a little missionary work in this direction, and then may we hope that the time is not far

distant, when so large a portion of the money given for the support of public instruction shall no longer be thrown away.

W.

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MY FRIEND, THE BOOK AGENT.

In the light of a teachable spirit, every object that meets the eye, has a meaning. Every form of matter, every manifestation of mind, has more to teach than men are apt to learn. Even the commonest things that we see, the most trivial events of life may instruct us. Wisdom utters her voice in the streets to every listening ear. So the mountain daisy upturned by Burns' plow, speaks of human frailty; the old clock on the stairs repeats to Longfellow the story of immortality, while the vine and its branches, the numbered hairs of the head, the shepherd and his fold, the mustard seed, the lilies of the field and even the sparrows, two of which are sold for a farthing, become under the instruction of the great teacher, him of Nazareth, symbols of the highest and most important truths. \*

And so every man exhibits some lesson—is some good or bad quality vitalized, and thus brought within the sphere of human attainment. The beggar boy at the street corner, the millionaire who despises him, the spendthrift, the fool by the wayside, all classes and conditions of men may live for our instruction.

I have taken this circuitous route to arrive at my subject for the best of reasons; for although geometry has taught me that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points, it is not presumption in me to say that it is not always the most attractive measurement. A curve is my line of beauty and, as I hope to illustrate in the person of my book-vender, the surest way of arriving at anything is not always the most direct.

The object of a book agent is, of course, to sell books. A young tyro might burst into your room, and with a pirati-



cal air demand your influence. Not so the genuine monger. He enters the softly opening door, with a bland smile on his face, that entirely conceals the bargain in his heart. There is nothing ominous of books, of publishers; you do not see in him vengeful parents beaming black thunder on the brow and vivid lightning 'in the eye, and demanding amid the war of elements, why you want a change of books, you do not see the prospective fingers of your agent nimbly plying in your patrons' pocket. No, no, indeed! It's not his style; nothing abrupt, nothing blunt in him. Did you ever hear of a cautious man making a circuit of his house before entering? That's his way. A skillful general will reconnoitre a position, ere he storms it. So my friend goes to work. First, the beauties of nature appear; it has been a fine day—air balmy, &c.; poetry succeeds, and painting, and sculpture, and whatever else can please the mind, and when the way is thoroughly prepared, he pops the question, and pops it just exactly in the nick of time.

A painter well instructed in his art, distributes the light and shade of his picture in such a manner, that each feature points to the principal object to be brought forth. My book agent is an artist in his way. The beauties of nature first appear upon his picture, and all things are rosy and sunny; the muses and the graces succeed and heighten the scene to one of exquisite felicity; but these gradually assume a somber aspect and take the back ground, while softly and sweetly as the light of morning, the true subject dawns and grows upon your vision until your beautiful dissolving view presents Nature, the muses and the graces, in the dark groundwork, holding forth new editions of Greenleaf, Green, or McNally. Thus you see do the sacred nine and the beautiful nymphs leave their divine homes and go to peddling books. Isn't it beautiful?

You have perhaps fortified yourself against one of these venders. You have occupied a refrigerator, becoming a small iceberg to freeze him away; you have entrenched yourself behind a collar that no human sympathy seemed able to frustrate and have covered up the heart with a false



bosom stiff as buckram, and impervious as a rhinoceros' hide. To what purpose? Your ice melts in the genial warmth of his disposition. Your collar rolls down; your dickey wilts. The difficulty was that on your part, an immediate assault was expected and when you supposed he would ask your opinion, and you were all ready to answer "no," and give it broad and flat, he presented what you could not dissent from and reduced by a siege what a direct assault could never have conquered.

Did you ever see a spider entrap a fly? It is when the web is wound all about him that the victim is killed and eaten. "Will you walk into my parlor," says the book agent. He sugars the pill.

Thus, I say the man becomes successful, mankind pays willing tribute to such a character. You may call me foolish, (and you may tell the truth) but I have been well cheated by a polite trader, and felt much more pleasant than when dealt fairly with, by a crabbed man.

I have felt a flush of pleasure upon my countenance, when some one said I was looking well though I knew it was false, while the expression of another, "as ugly as sin," though much nearer the truth, impressed me by no means so pleasantly. Do you know anything about this?

Now this quality in my friend is profitable for the study of teachers. Many are the instructors of the gradgrind stamp, whose mission is to plug hard truths into small minds, who do it in a most unwelcome manner, who think there is no study but brown study, in whose minds a class of pupils are to be loaded like guns and well rammed down for a future discharge.

Who has not met a disciple of this school unwilling to say any thing but "two times two?" And can any person wonder that the child should dislike one whom he associates with nothing but figures and long rules? How often would the weight of a lesson be lifted from young minds by a pleasing, though it were an indirect manner of introducing a topic. Especially in primary classes how much some pleasing anecdote might sweeten the otherwise unpalatable task,

how much nimbler would be the thought and how would the exercise become lively and spirited! Many grown men love a lie well told better than a truth clumsily spoken; dry theology and dull lectures are subject to a curse; much more is this true of children. Why then; should the path of knowledge remain dusty and forbidding, when flowers may deck the way? In a long poem, an episode is occasionally introduced for relief. Let us introduce episodes to our classes and sweeten instruction. Let us be disabused of this notion that we must continually drill, drill, drill, while young brains are aching for relief.

Did you never open a rough broadside of facts upon a class that reeled from the shock, and then feel obliged to return and gradually instill the principles into the minds, and have you not felt how much better would have been a pleasant familiar way of teaching; a spirit which would have said, "come, let us reason together?" Such, then, is one of the qualities shown forth in the person of the book agent; a quality well worthy of imitation by us all; there are many others useful in our practice. Some of these it was my first intention to consider, but my trespass upon your time is already great. I had intended to speak of his earnestness, giving life to every action and making labor sweet, for you know play is but work with a good will,—of his patience, of his enterprising spirit which jumps at every chance of bargain, and of his perseverance finding no obstacle too great to be overcome, all these might furnish that upon which I could write more than you would read. "Sufficient," however, "for the day is the evil thereof." Allow me to say, before closing, that in an important sense are we allied to book agents. Intrusted to our care are works of untold value—works that will not be consumed, but which will "appear" at last, "in new and more beautiful editions corrected and amended by the author."

We need these qualities that we may be faithful agents and ready for the work of life and our coming change, that when we pass away, those who stand above us may say, "they are blessed, for they rest from their labors and their works do follow them."

T. A.

THE HEAVENLY CITY.

There's a city that lies in the country above,

In the glorious kingdom of rest,

Where dwell the blest spirits of beauty and love,

In their garments of radiance drest.

The demons of care,

Of pain and despair,

And the foes that assail us have never been there,

For in armor of light upon every hand,

By the portals the Seraphim sentinels stand.

Oh! the beautiful gates are more fair to behold,

Than aught upon earth that is known :

Of opal and ivory, jasper and gold,

And each has a name of its own,—

A magical name,

Set in letters of flame,

And the pilgrim must show in his bosom the same,

Ere he enter this marvellous city above,

And the names of the gates are Truth, Mercy, and Love.

Oh! glad are the fountains whose waters of life

Fall down in a musical rain!

And the sad souls that drink mortal sorrow and strife,

Shall never revisit again :

But under the palms

They chant their psalms,

In the summers of long elysian calms,

Or roam the grand gardens of peace and perfume,

Weaving their wreaths of the amaranth bloom.

When the summer sunset's crimsoning fires

Are aglow in the western sky,

The pilgrim discovers the domes and spires

Of this wonderful city on high,

And can there behold

The temples of gold,

Fairer than aught that can ever be told,

Of the radiant home of the souls of the blest

That lies in this glorious kingdom of rest.

O friends! who have passed from these valleys of time,  
 Though we linger we shall not despair!  
 For our hearts are with you in those mansions sublime,  
 And soon you shall welcome us there.  
 Then friend with friend,  
 Our spirits shall blend,  
 In the rapturous transport that never shall end,  
 While the crystalline avenues tremble and ring,  
 With honor, and homage, and praise to the king!

H. S. CORNWELL.

NEW LONDON, Conn.

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## Resident Editor's Department.

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### OPPOSING VIEWS.

IN teaching, as in other departments, different persons arrive at results through dissimilar processes. Young teachers are often perplexed by the counter views of their elders in experience. To-day, they read a decided article in commendation of certain plans which seem to possess much of the *ne plus ultra* element. To-morrow, they see an equally decided and able article in favor of widely different plans. One writer condemns, most unqualifiedly, all resort to corporal punishment, while another pleads for it as a last resort, and still another as the grand panacea for school room disturbances. In grammar, some are tenacious of the old plan of parsing, while others abandon it entirely and contend for *analysis*, as the only true process. Mr. C. thinks the old methods of teaching the alphabet and spelling as the only correct ones, while Mr. E. ridicules them as "old foggyish" and absurd. Mr. A. believes that pupils should be made to learn their lessons so that they may repeat, *verbatim*, the language of the text book,—and is satisfied with that though the pupil may not gain a single definite idea. Mr. B., on the other hand, is a stickler for the idea, and regardless of the

words in which it is expressed. These incongruous views, as intimated in the leading article of the present number, are to be met with in all the departments of education.

In view of this state of affairs, what shall young and inexperienced teachers do? We answer, they must use their common sense and exercise their judgment. One man may excel by adopting a certain course, while another would utterly fail in his efforts in the same direction. We would say to young teachers,—read carefully and ponder considerably. First satisfy yourself whether a certain plan as a whole is objectionable, and if it is not, then consider whether it is one that you can heartily approve and adopt with enthusiasm. Sincerity and earnestness have much to do with the success of a plan or undertaking. If you attempt to be a mere copyist of another, you will surely fail. What course soever you adopt, must be one that will enlist your confidence. You must have faith in it,—a faith that will awaken effort,—effort that will be crowned with noble results. By some excellent teachers, the “marking or credit system” is regarded as of the highest importance, while others, of equally high standing, repudiate it entirely. Now we believe both are right and both are wrong,—according to the stand point from which the subject is viewed. With a teacher of discriminating mind, and a liberal share of common sense and a strong love for his work, the marking system will work well enough and have its good effects, while with one who is a mere routine teacher and lacking in the essentials named, the same system will be liable to objections and difficulties at every step. So, indeed, will it be with any system.

We would recommend teachers to consider these different views and adopt such,—with or without modification,—as they can fully approve and cheerfully practice. All plans and views may require some change when modified by circumstances more or less different,—and no plan or system will produce satisfactory results, unless it receives the hearty approval of the teacher who tries it. Hence we would say to teachers, young or old,—“never adopt any system simply

and solely because it is recommended by some one else." Consider it carefully. Weigh its advantages and its disadvantages, and if, upon the whole, it meets your approval so that you can give it an earnest and cheerful trial,—adopt it, modifying it as existing circumstances may require.\* But never make any system a "hobby:" use it as a help in, and not as a "royal road" to, the accomplishment of your great work. The best system or plans will be utterly barren of good results in the hands of a senseless, conceited or lazy teacher,—and any system to be efficient must have constantly breathed into it and infused through it the spirit of the true and earnest teacher.

Unfortunately, in teaching as in other professions, there are those who are completely carried away by every "wind of doctrine;" unstable in mind they are constantly seeking after something new and never "holding fast" to that which is good. Any decent system faithfully carried out is preferable to that spirit of incessant change, and love of novelty and experiment which so characterize the movements of some teachers. Again, we say the teacher, to be successful with any plan, must possess and freely use judgment,—judgment largely modified by COMMON SENSE.

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For the Common School Journal.

#### A VETERAN TEACHER.

It is profitable, sometimes, to pause amid the busy whirl of the present, and listen to voices from the past; to turn for a moment from the thronging, restless stage of active life, and sit at the feet of some aged pilgrim who has passed his threescore years and ten, and gather from his lips those gems of wisdom which age and experience alone can give. It was lately our privilege thus to converse with a gray-haired teacher, whose life has been one continued scene of effort for the advancement of education; and we propose to give a few notes of our interview, hoping that they may incite some other teacher to more earnest toil in his great work.

No name is more honored and respected by the teachers of Windam County, Connecticut, than that of JOHN GRIGGS, Esq., of Eastford. Commencing at the age of eighteen, he taught for *fifty-four successive winters*, or until he reached the age of seventy-two, with the exception of one season when prevented by ill health. He also occasionally taught during the summer. The former pupils of "Master Griggs," as he is familiarly known and revered far and wide, number nearly three thousand, and comprise three generations,—grandfather, father and child. Some noted men have received their early instruction in his schools,—among them, that patriot soldier and hero, Gen. NATHANIEL LYON, whose death lately sent such a thrill of sorrow through the whole North. As we spoke to him of the fallen hero, his mind at once went back to the past, and he remarked with emphasis, "Gen. Lyon was an industrious, successful and lovely pupil,"—and then how plainly was the secret of after success revealed.

Mr. Griggs was a member of the board of education for forty-four years; and his labors in teaching extended into three states and seventeen districts. Unlike many of the olden teachers, he always was and still is an earnest friend of progress. He does not cling to the mistakes of years gone by because they happened in "the good old time," but gladly hails modern improvements. Though now eighty-four years of age, and bent down with infirmities, he still continues to manifest a lively interest in schools; and, we doubt not, will, until "the silver cord is loosed, and the golden bowl is broken." Many a teacher and child have lately received kindly counsel from his lips. "Master Griggs" was always of a literary turn of mind, which his large rolls of clearly written manuscript abundantly prove. He still continues to write occasional articles for the press; and while we were present, recited in impressive tones some poetry which he had just composed, and which was soon to be published, on the death of Gen. Lyon. In ordinary conversation his sentences are remarkably terse,—and he strongly condemned the habit of using more words than are necessary to express our meaning, especially in school. Said he,



"A person who teaches school should never be a specimen of untutored loquacity."

As we listened to the words which this venerated father in the teachers' profession spoke, we felt that they had a double significance, coming as they did from one who had had so remarkable an experience in the work. We give in almost his exact words a few of the thoughts presented, which we noted down during the conversation. Said the veteran teacher, and his eyes kindled with the brilliancy of the olden time: "I never went to the school room a day without intending to do the best I could, and never was entirely satisfied with my efforts. I adopted these two leading principles in the government of my school: 1st, *Secure the friendship of my pupils*,—2nd, *Govern them*. I never could love them all alike, but I avoided, conscientiously, any partiality to any member of the school to the injury of others. I always aimed to convince their reason of the justness of my commands. In respect to punishment, I ever avoided 'pounding the heads' of my pupils. Large, bold scholars I would punish in the presence of the school, but modest, retiring ones may be dealt with in private. I never 'twitted' a child for some past offense because he had been guilty of another; but preferred settling any controversy at the time to alluding to it afterwards. Instead of threatening absolute punishment for given offenses, I always told my pupils that I should be governed by circumstances in my treatment of them. I sometimes reproved a fault in too hasty a manner, which never did any good. In all instances where my reproof flowed from love to the scholar, it produced a salutary effect. I recollect *no instance* of any serious trouble with a scholar whose confidence and friendship I had gained. The most successful pupils I ever had, never required a rebuke. *Among the host of young ladies who attended my school, I never had trouble with more than one or two!* Visiting schools is of the *utmost* importance. A school teacher will be worth a third more if he receives visits from the parents,—so will the school. I repeat it again and again, *it is of the utmost importance*. It is an all important impression

to be made on pupils, to teach them to fear God and keep his commandments."

These words of course are but a mere outline of the kindly counsels given by this aged teacher. In view of his large number of pupils, we remarked to him that his influence had been truly wonderful; but with his natural modesty, he simply mourned that it had been so feeble and imperfect. But knowing as we did, how faithfully and earnestly he had labored, how his memory was cherished in the hearts of hundreds, we could but feel that multitudes would yet rise up and call him blessed.

Nearly three thousand young minds guided and influenced by a single teacher, and that influence deepening and widening in thousands more to day;—what a thought!

Fellow teacher, take courage! and press forward in thy glorious mission.

S. J. W.

WESTFORD, Conn., Sept. 3d, 1861.

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For the Common School Journal.

#### A HAND ORGAN.

A young Italian entered our gate at noon to-day, bearing an organ on his back, accompanied by a younger performer on the tambourine, and followed by the usual juvenile crowd with hands in their pockets, eyes wide open, and mouths agape with wonder.

Now I am ready to acknowledge that I am one of those of whom my friends of the class "old maid speak, as well meaning enough, but *queer*." (By the way, did you ever think what a convenient word, this "*queer*" is; made, it would seem, to include and account for, all the individual peculiarities of the human race?) And I fear my impulsive actions often "shock" the ideas of these "exceedingly proper" ones.

Among my childish weaknesses, I must own to an affection.  
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tion for hand organs. To be sure, I *have* heard those which somewhat disturbed the tranquility of my nervous system, but commonly I am as much delighted at the sound of one, as the juveniles before mentioned, and leave my book or work to rush to the door or window, in a manner far too undignified for a "school ma'am." I did so to-day, and found it was an old friend of mine, who carried one of the sweetest instruments of the kind I ever heard. He nodded cordially at his old acquaintance, and continued his music with a smiling face.

"Dixie,!" that is lively and pretty, and my feet begin to move uneasily, and I almost venture a wish that my education had been sufficiently unorthodox to include dancing. But it is better to *hear* "Dixie," than to *be* there, just now, is it not?

"Irish Washerwoman!" Ah, I have heard my grandmother tell how she first met her "good man," at a ball, and that was the first tune to which they danced together. Dear old lady! she never could hear it, without seeming to grow young again.

What next? Sounds natural! Must have heard it *lately* somewhere? Oh! Ah! Yes! "Star Spangled Banner!"

And so on, till I bring my foreign friend a bit to eat. He sits down under the great tree, and takes his dinner while answering my questions. He is from "dear Italy," and came "cross de sea, to de big citee, New York, to get plenty moneys." His meal over, before he departs, with his low bow, and heartily spoken "thanks!" he plays one more tune.

"Rosalie, the Prairie Flower." Call it old, worn out, common, if you will. The air is one I used to sing with a pleasant band of pupils, in a distant city, and the sound of its notes has carried me back, in memory, to my cheerful, busy school room. Here they are, the long rows of seats, the high windows, the black-boards covered with familiar examples in arithmetic, and sentences in analysis, the brown-covered reference dictionary before the teacher's desk, and the desk itself, with my own chair at the left end of the platform.

In fancy, I may seat myself again, and forget that I have

no right there now, that even my face would be strange to most of the youth that gather there daily. The faces I seem to see, are no strangers to me.

Here, in front, is Ellen —, the least in size, the greatest in capacities for mischief, of any here; of whom her mother says, in a tone of discouragement, "she never was still a minute!"—a fact which I can readily believe. Yet I never could be very severe with the child, she had such a pretty face, and was so penitent when reproved. The young miss who has just risen with such an air of consequence, is Angelina Matilda Smith, who writes astonishing "poetry," "does not wish to associate with poor girls," and always fails in her arithmetic lesson.

Louisa —, sedate, studious, always faithful, the earth will hold one the more noble woman, if her life is spared. Lizzie —, always brings sunshine with her, writes compositions "for the fun of the thing," and sings as merrily as the black-bird in the meadows of her own country home, which she left for a while, to come to our school. Jane —, sly, unprincipled, deceitful, needs constant watching, and is as troublesome in stirring up rebellion among her school mates, as is South Carolina among her sister states.

Dear Hattie —, fair and sweet, has a frail spiritual look, which causes me sometimes to hold her tightly for a moment, when she comes for a good-night kiss, with an undefined fear that the angels will come to withdraw her from my clasp.

Across the broad aisle, behold the miniature "lords of creation," a few of whom already manifest a dislike to be held subject to feminine rule, and evidently think their dignity compromised, by being obliged to "mind a woman."

Not so Walter —, who came here, dull and discouraged, thinking himself a dunce, and expected to be treated as such. Kindness and patience have accomplished what previous harshness failed to gain, and the boy bends over his book with an earnest purpose, only looking off to give me a grateful smile, and receive a glance of encouragement in return.

Henry W. —, who is the "jolly good fellow" of his play-mates, who brings me more confectionery than any other boy, who offers politely to take my books home, or run for my umbrella, and is a favorite on the other side of the house, yet has a roguish eye, and I know if that boy gets off the right track, I must think quickly and act decidedly, or there will be trouble. Yonder is William —, industrious, trustworthy, and —

But my organ-grinder shut the gate long ago, and though the last notes of "Rosalie" have echoed and re-echoed through my busy brain, I am reminded that I have been occupied with that which is only a thing of the past.

I have no right on that platform, no place in that chair. I cannot sit and look into bright eyes and youthful faces, and talk familiarly on common things to a listening group, or hear the hourly recitations, or join heartily in the good, old school songs, on which their voices rang out sweet and clear.

Yet all these things have been, and I love to think of them; and though my busy boys and girls have grown to be almost men and women, and have nearly forgotten their former teacher, yet I know their minds unconsciously bear the marks of my labor, the impress of my influence. I grow serious with the thought, and pray God to forgive and counteract all the harm done through neglect or ignorance, and strengthen and perfect all the good planted for His sake, though it was done in weakness and trembling.

J. G. E.

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#### ILL NEVER FORGIVE HIM.

##### STORY FOR YOUTH.

"ILL never forgive him—never!"

"Never is a hard word, John," said the sweet-faced wife of John Locke, as she looked up a moment from her sewing.

"He is a mean dastardly coward, and upon this holy Bible I——"

"Stop, husband, John, remember he is my brother; by the love you bear me—forbear to curse him. He has done you wrong, I allow, but oh! John he is very young and very sorry. The momentary shame you felt yesterday will hardly be wiped out with a curse. It will only injure yourself, John. Oh, please don't say any thing dreadful."

The sweet-faced woman prevailed; the curse that hung upon the lips of the angry man was not spoken; but still he said—

"I'll never forgive him—he has done me deadly wrong."

The young man who had provoked his bitterness, humbled and repentant, sought in vain for forgiveness from him, whom in a moment of passion, he had injured beyond reparation. John Locke steeled his heart against him.

In his store sat the young village merchant, one pleasant morning, contentedly reading the morning paper. The sound of hurried footsteps approached, but he took no notice of it until a hatless boy burst into the store, screaming at the top of his voice—

"Mr. Locke, Johnny is in the river—little Johnny Locke."

To dash down the paper, and spring for the street, was the first impulse of the agonized father. On, on, like a maniac he flew, till he reached the bank of the river, pallid and crazed with anguish. The first sight that met his eyes was little Johnny, lying in the arms of his mother, who, with her hair hanging dishevelled around her, bent wildly over her child. The boy was just saved. He breathed, and opening his eyes, smiled faintly in his mother's face; while she, with a choking voice, thanked God. Another form lay insensible, stretched near the child. From its head the dark blood flowed from a ghastly wound. The man against whom John Locke had sworn eternal hatred, had, at the risk of his own life, been the saver of the child. He struck a floating piece of drift-wood as he came to the surface with the boy, and death seemed inevitable.

John Locke flung himself down on the green sward, and

bent over the senseless form. "Save him," he cried, huskily to the doctor, who had been summoned. "Restore him to consciousness, if it be only one little moment; I have something important to say to him."

"He is reviving," replied the doctor. The wounded man opened his eyes, they met the anxious glance of the brother-in-law, and the pale lips trembled forth—"Do you forgive me?" "Yes, yes; God is witness, as I hope for mercy hereafter, I freely forgive you, and in turn, ask your forgiveness for my unchristian conduct!"

A feeble pressure of the hand, and a beaming smile, were all the answer.

Many days the brave young man hung upon a slender thread of life; and never were there more devoted friends than those who hovered over the sick bed. But a vigorous constitution triumphed, and pale and changed he walked forth once more among the living.

"Oh! if he had died with my unkindness clouding his soul, never should I have dared to hope for mercy from my Father in Heaven!" said John Locke, to his wife, as they sat talking over the solemn event that had threatened their lives with living trouble. "Never—now I have tasted the sweetness of forgiveness—never again will I cherish revenge or unkindness toward the erring; for there is new meaning to my soul in the words of our daily prayer, and I see that I have only been calling judgment upon myself, while I have impiously asked, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those that trespass against us."

---

#### CHILDREN'S LESSONS.

Gathered by them, all unconscious  
Ere the dawn of life has fled;  
Gathered by them from the fireside,  
From the living—from the dead.  
From the home, where they love-cherished,  
Shielded from all care or ill;  
From the smile of true affection,  
That above them, resteth still.



From the garret, cold and dreary,  
Where the infant form may sleep;  
From the pale face e'er above it;  
From the eyes that ever weep.  
Taught of gladness from caresses,  
Sadness, from deep sorrow's moan,  
Heaven, from bended knees and blessings,  
Earth, from many and many a tone.  
Beauty's lesson e'en is found  
In a floweret's tiny cup;  
And from evil things the teaching  
In the heart is garnered up.  
Learned too, life's noble action,  
From example good and pure;  
And the tasks of sin and folly,  
Are committed *all too sure!*  
So, where'er, 'mid good or evil  
Life is found, are children taught;  
And each lesson to the future,  
Is, with vast importance, fraught.  
Guide them, then, Most Gracious Father,  
To the wisdom found in Thee!  
Grant to all, thy strong upholding,  
While their earthly guides may be!  
So, that if in hut or palace,  
Sacred courts or scenes of sin,  
Thy true lessons may be gathered,  
Soon as "life's school" shall begin.

A. E. A.

---

**DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL IDEAS.**

"TRAIN up a child in the way he should go" is not only God's command to parents, but it is society's first demand on both teacher and parent. This training, too, is one of the first needs of the child's own nature. With it, happiness is within his reach; without it, not only is his own happiness impossible, but he will interfere with that of others.

This training should be commenced very early. As soon

as emotion is felt it may be biased by education. The impressions that adhere longest to us, and are the deepest, are those of which we remember not the origin—those which we imbibed unconsciously in infancy. The child's disposition may issue from this period with a strong bent to good. Then there are no obstacles to overcome; nothing to unlearn; the affections are soft and pliable. If this period pass without moral training, the difficulties are greatly increased, the affections take a bent of their own.

The great means of training the moral feelings is to draw them out into action. A feeling without action is mere sentiment; it does nothing. If we would cultivate kindness, we must show kindness in our deeds; if reverence, we must exhibit the example of reverence; if we would develop ideas of justice, honesty, truthfulness, we must improve the opportunities of daily intercourse to exemplify them.

It will be of little use to tell the child about reverence, justice, honesty, truthfulness, if these are never acted before it; it is only by *acts* that the child can know them. We have too much abstract teaching in morals, as well as in mental education. The *law of exercise* is of universal application to moral and mental, as well as in physical training. And there is greater room for activity here than most of us at first suppose. The daily lessons and occurrences of the schoolroom, and the incidents of the playground, furnish opportunities for the most effective lessons in morals. To seize upon these opportunities, and to improve them in the right spirit, should be the earnest aim of every teacher.

Let the golden rule be the key-note in moral training; teach the children to do to others as they would have others do to them. This positive teaching is the characteristic feature of the morality of the New Testament.

Much of this instruction may be most profitably given incidentally, without stated times for moral training; yet there are first ideas of God, virtue, right, love to others, duty, etc., which should be taken up and presented in regular succession for the development of simple moral and religious truths as a foundation for future instruction.

Children should be taught ideas of *God as a kind father*; of *God as the maker of all things*; of *an immortal mind*; of *conscience*; of *truth*; of *obedience*; of *industry*; of *cleanliness*; of *order*. And all of this training should be simple familiar, and free from technical phrases and formal teaching; it should be chiefly illustrated by examples and incidents from life. "Our Father, who art in heaven," should be the key-note of this instruction; then love, reverence, and obedience to Him would have a real significance to the young.

Let the fundamental ideas of religion be thus established in early childhood, and they will shine out clearly in future years, an anchor of rescue to the soul when happiness and life seem about to be wrecked forever. Simple moral truths thus early planted in the heart have rescued many a noble youth from the whirlpool of corruption, when all other lessons of wisdom had been washed away by the waves of passion.—*Primary Object Lessons*.

---

JAPANESE LITTLE FOLKS.—The Hon. Frank Hall, who is now in Japan, speaks thus favorably of the Nihponese children. During more than half a year's residence in Japan, I have never seen a quarrel among young or old. I have never seen a blow struck, scarcely an angry face. I have seen the children at their sports, flying their kites on the hills, and no amount of intertangled strings, or kites lodged in the trees, provoked angry words or impatience. I have seen them intent on their games of jackstones and marbles under the shaded gateways of the temples, but have never seen an approach to a quarrel among them. They are taught implicit obedience to their parents, but I have never seen one of them chastised. Respect and reverence to the aged is universal. A crying child is a rarity seldom heard or seen. We have nothing to teach them in this respect out of our abundant civilization. I speak what I know of the little folks of Japan, for more than any other foreigner have I been among them. (Of all that Japan holds, there is nothing I like half so well as the happy children. I shall always remember their sloe-black eyes and ruddy brown faces with pleasure. I have played battledore with the little maidens in the streets, and flown kites in the fields with as happy a

set of boys as one could wish to see. They have been my guides in my rambles, shown me where all the streams and ponds were, where the flowers lay hid in the thicket, where the berries were ripening on the hills; they have brought me shells from the ocean and blossoms from the field, presenting them with all the modesty and less bashful grace than a young American boy would do. We have hunted the fox-holes together, and looked for the green and golden ducks among the hedges. They have laughed at my broken Japanese, and taught me better, and for a happy, good-natured set of children, I will turn out my little Japanese friends against the world. God bless the boys and girls of Nippon!

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PARTING HYMN.

WE have been requested to publish the following, which was inadvertently omitted in its proper place.

*Normal School, Class of 1858.*

PARTING HYMN.—BY. B. W. MAPLES.

The hour to part has come—the last  
 That we may spend together here;  
 Our rapid thoughts review the past,  
 And we regret the end is near;  
 We fain would linger where we know  
 So much of joy, so little sorrow,  
 Yet, though reluctantly we go,  
 We wish not to defer the morrow.

We go to labor—wide the field  
 In which our welcome task we find;  
 In the last day will be revealed  
 How we have moulded plastic mind;  
 With this in view we'll ever give  
 Our care, our thought, our best endeavor  
 Such works to do, such lives to live  
 As, finished here, endure forever.

The hour to part has come—we go  
 From scenes and places we have loved;  
 We may not meet again below,  
 But, should our future stand approved,

We all shall meet in realms above,  
And there receive a welcome greeting,  
When, in the realms of peace and love,  
We hold our lasting, final meeting.

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**GATHERING SPONGES AT THE BAHAMAS.**—The sponge business is largely pursued at the Bahama Islands. The exports of this article amount annually to about \$200,000. It is almost entirely the growth of the last twenty years. During that period the article has nearly quadrupled in value, and has been applied to a great variety of new purposes, especially in France.

The sponge is compressed in powerful presses and sacked like cotton. It is assorted and graded, samples being fastened on each package to show its quality.

It is fished or raked, or grappled up from the clean sandy bottom at the depth of twenty, forty, and even sixty feet, and often far out from the shore. The water is so transparent that the growing sponge is visible on the bottom.

The sponge is the covering, the habitation, of the lowest order of animated nature. Indeed, organization can hardly be detected in the animal.

The sponge, when first taken from the water, is black, and at once becomes offensive to the smell. It will almost cause the flesh it touches to blister.

The first process is to bury it in the sand, where it remains for two or three weeks, when the gelatinous animal matter seems to be absorbed or destroyed, or eaten by the insects that swarm in the sand.

The boatmen who obtain it are paid in shares by the owners of the boats. This therefore becomes a precarious and semi-gambling pursuit, like wrecking, highly attractive to the colored population.

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#### DEVELOPMENT IN OBSERVATION.

THE first step toward a preparation for training the minds of children should be to ascertain the nature of the beings to be educated, and the processes adapted to the development of their faculties. When this is understood properly, it will be an easy matter to adapt instruction to them. As an introduction to this step, we will state, at

the outset, a few important facts as a basis of the development of the intellectual faculties.

1. Our knowledge of the material world is derived through the senses. Objects, and the various phenomena of the external world, are the subjects upon which the faculties first exercise themselves. Knowledge begins with experience.

2. Perception is the first stage of intelligence. Primary education begins with the culture of the perceptive faculties; this culture chiefly consists in affording occasions and stimulants for their development, and in fixing perceptions in the mind by means of representative language.

3. The natural and most healthful incentive to attention and the acquisition of knowledge, with children, is the association of pleasure with instruction. Curiosity, or the desire of knowledge, and the love of the beautiful and of the wonderful, are great actuating principles of early childhood, and their gratification is always accompanied by pleasurable emotions. Children possess a natural craving for knowledge as well as for occupation. Success affords them pleasure. Self-dependence is another powerful agent of culture.

4. Instruction should give pleasure to children, and where it does not there is something wrong, either in the mode of presenting it or in the subject-matter selected for instruction.

5. All the faculties are developed and invigorated by proper exercise; they may be enfeebled by being overtasked, or by being exercised on subjects which do not come within their proper sphere.

6. The chief object of primary education is the development of the faculties. The period of development is emphatically that of the first ten years of the child's life.

7. Some faculties are as active and almost as vigorous in the child as they are in the man. Among these are sensation, perception, observation, and simple memory. Other powers of the mind do not attain their full development until the child has arrived at the period of maturity. Among these are abstraction, the higher powers of reason, imagination, philosophical memory, generalization, etc.

8. The habits of attention and concentration are great main-springs of education. Habits are formed by repetitions of the same act. The great secret in fixing the attention of children is to interest them—to mingle delightful associations with learning—never to overstrain their faculties, or to fatigue them by keeping them too long directed to one particular subject.

9. The natural process of education is from the simple to the com-

plex, from the known to the unknown, from facts to causes, principles before rules, ideas before words, things before names.

10. Explanations of some of the leading terms employed in treating of the action of the intellectual faculties:—

*Sensations*—impressions made upon the mind through the medium of the senses.

*Perception*—Cognizance of sensation; taking notice of the data presented to the mind by the senses.

*Attention*—a bending to, stretching toward; a process of the mind by which it detains the thoughts and directs them to the one object in view.

*Observation*—attention to perceptions for the purpose of complete conceptions and perfect recognition; holding before the mind with attention.

We are now prepared to state more definitely the order and process by which the minds of children gain knowledge, and to point out the steps to be taken in developing their faculties. We do not attempt here to account for all the actions and phenomena of mind, but simply to mention the leading faculties which are employed by children, and to indicate the order in which these act.

The *senses* furnish to the mind its means of contact with the external world. Through *sensations* the mind gains *perceptions* from the objects around it. *Perceptions* lead to *conceptions* of ideas, which are retained or recalled by *memory*. *Imagination* takes up these ideas, combines and presents them in new forms. *Reason* proceeds to investigate them by more definite modes, and *judgment* is the result.

Again, *sensations give perceptions; attention to perceptions constitutes observation. By means of observation knowledge is obtained.*

It follows, then, that the first aim of the primary teacher, and of the parent, at instruction, should be *to cultivate in the child habits of accurate observation*. Such habits—clear perceptions, fixed attention, and watchful observation—become a guaranty for the acquisition of knowledge in after years.

Nature suggests the true plan for accomplishing this desirable end in the course which the child itself pursues in the examination of the various objects which surround it. The instructor should fall in with the child's desire to know, and allow it to exercise its senses upon each new object presented to it, by seeing, feeling, hearing, tasting, or smelling it, as the case may be. This is Nature's method of teaching, and man never has been able to improve it. By the use of its perceptive faculties on the objects around it, the child acquires a large



stock of ideas before it goes to school. The teacher should begin her instruction at the point at which the child has arrived when school-life begins, and lead the mind gradually forward from one degree of knowledge to another. She should begin with things that are familiar to the child, and lead it to use the knowledge already acquired in obtaining new ideas. Words and their uses will naturally succeed a knowledge of things, because language will be needed to express the ideas derived from them. Here we perceive Nature's method to be *things before words*. If, then, we would improve the language of a child, we must first give it ideas, then words to enable it to express those ideas.

Sometimes children employ original terms to express their thoughts; these should be accepted, and if faulty, let errors be pointed out and right words be given. Whenever a new word or term is to be taught, the thing or idea of which the term is a sign should be taught first, and be understood by the pupil before the word is presented. In all cases let the teacher present *first* to her pupils a clear picture of the idea, then its name will have a meaning which it would not otherwise possess; and when used, it will call up a distinct conception in the mind. The opposite method—that of giving first the sign of the idea, and in too many instances the word only—is opposed to the first principles of education, and its results may be witnessed every day in the mere word knowledge of our schools.

All our ideas are primarily derived from nature; books merely represent the knowledge thus obtained; therefore it must be evident that books instruct us only so far as we are able to connect the words contained in them with the ideas which those words represent. Since ideas are not derived primarily from words, but from things, it follows that our teaching should begin with things, ideas, and principles.

No man becomes a good farmer, or carpenter, or painter, or engineer, or surgeon, from books alone; he must have *observation* and *practice*—in other words, *experience*, to make what he reads in books a living reality, so that words shall be to him as pictures to represent those realities.

If habits of accurate observation are ever attained, the foundation must be laid in childhood. Since children delight in natural knowledge—a knowledge of things—and since a constant impulse to know seems to urge them to acquire correct ideas of the objects about them, a little encouragement will lead them to employ this useful and divinely-implanted desire so that observation will become a most valu-

able habit. Thousands of evidences exist around us proving that this noble impulse, if neglected or checked in childhood, becomes greatly diminished in activity, even so far as almost to cease to take notice of the beauty and wonders of the world.—*Calkin's*.

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MISCELLANEOUS.

**TEACHERS' INSTITUTES.**—The following Institutes will be held during the present month :

At LITCHFIELD, in the County of Litchfield, on the 15th, 16th, 17th and 18th. On Wednesday, the 16th, at 10 o'clock, A. M., there will be a meeting of the School Visitors of the county, to discuss important questions relating to the improvement of Common Schools. It is hoped there will be a full attendance from all parts of the county.

An Institute for Windham County will be held in Scotland on Thursday and Friday, Oct. 24th and 25th, and one for New London County at JEWETT CITY, on Tuesday and Wednesday, Oct. 29th and 30th.

Institutes of two days each, will probably be held in some other town of each of these counties, of which due notice will be given by circulars.

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**STATE MEETING.**—We would call special attention to the programme of the next annual meeting of the State Association. The exercises are to be of a highly practical nature, and will be particularly valuable to our primary teachers. The teachers of Hartford have done nobly in proffering hospitality to the female teachers who may attend, and the Railroads have generously consented to grant free return tickets. Let us have a large and enthusiastic meeting,—a meeting whose influences shall be felt for good for many years.

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**HONOR TO A SCHOOLMASTER.**—We learn, with pleasure, that the honorary degree of A. M. has been conferred on Amos A. White of New London, by Madison University, of Hamilton, N. Y.

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Several Book Notices are necessarily deferred.

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We would call the attention of any of our readers who may be in want of stoves or furnaces, to the advertisement of Mr. Allen. We know him to be reasonable in his charges, and gentlemanly in his treatment of his customers.

## STATE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.

THE Ninth Annual Meeting of the Connecticut State Teachers' Association, will be held at HARTFORD, on the 31st Oct. and 1st Nov.

The following will be the order of exercises :

Thursday evening, Oct. 31st.—Opening lecture at 7½ o'clock, by Hon. DAVID N. CAMP, Superintendent of schools.

Friday, Nov. 1, 9 o'clock.—Meeting for business and discussion.

At 10½ o'clock, Lecture on "Object Lessons," by N. A. CALKINS, Esq., of New York—to be followed by a discussion.

At 2 o'clock, P. M., the Association will meet in sections as last year.

At 3 o'clock, P. M., Hon. JOHN D. PHILBRICK, of Boston, will address the Association on "Primary Schools and Primary School Instruction:" to be followed by a discussion.

Friday evening will be devoted to short addresses from teachers and friends of education from various parts of the state.

The proprietors of the Trumbull House and United States Hotel have very kindly offered to furnish board for those who attend the meeting, at the rate of one dollar per day.

The teachers of Hartford have very generously offered to provide free accommodations to all female teachers who may attend,—and all wishing to avail themselves of this offer are earnestly requested to send their names to F. F. Barrows, Esq., Hartford, previous to the day of meeting.

The Hartford, Springfield and New Haven, the Hartford, Providence and Fishkill Railroads, have already consented to give free return tickets, and it is expected that all the others, as heretofore, will grant the same favor,—with the exception of the New York and New Haven road.

J. W. ALLEN, *President.*

F. F. BARROWS, *Secretary.*

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